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ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3623	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

PTO-90C (Rev. 10/03)

		Application No.	Applicant(s)
		09/834,834	PARMASAD ET AL.
Office Action Summary		Examiner	Art Unit
		Peter Choi	3623

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) FROM
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.
- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed
  after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
  Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any
  earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *13 April 2001*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is
closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-39* is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-39* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *13 April 2001* is/are: a)☐ accepted or b)☒ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

      1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage
application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .

5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) ☐ Other: _____.

     Office Action Summary   Part of Paper No./Mail Date 20050302

DETAILED ACTION

1.   Claims 1-39 are pending in the application.

Priority

2.   Applicant has not complied with one or more conditions for receiving the benefit
of an earlier filing date under 35 U.S.C. 119(e) as follows:

An application in which the benefits of an earlier application are desired must
contain a specific reference to the prior application(s) in the first sentence(s) of the
specification or in an application data sheet by identifying the prior application by
application number (37 CFR 1.78(a)(2) and (a)(5)). If the prior application is a non-
provisional application, the specific reference must also include the relationship (i.e.,
continuation, divisional, or continuation-in-part) between the applications except when
the reference is to a prior application of a CPA assigned the same application number.

Drawings

3.   The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5)
because they include the following reference character(s) not mentioned in the
description:

Figure 4B features element 442 (Vote Documentation, Vote FOR/AGAINST),
which is not disclosed in the specification.

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d), or amendment to

the specification to add the reference character(s) in the description in compliance with

37 CFR 1.121(b) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the

application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures

appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being

amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be

labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37

CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be

notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The

objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4.   The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that

form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5.   Claims 1 - 5, 7, 9 - 10, 16, 18 - 24, 26 - 28, 33, and 35 - 36 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Bayer et al. (U.S Patent #6,311,190).

As per claim 1, Bayer et al. teaches a method for determining a voting result for a

voting issue, comprising:

providing notification of a voting website to a plurality of eligible voters, wherein

the notification is provided via an email message sent to each eligible voter of the

plurality of eligible voters, wherein the notification provides the plurality of eligible voters

with access to the voting website (with a hyperlink to the URL) [Column 13, lines 56-58

and Column 18, lines 55-60];

for each eligible voter of the plurality of eligible voters that accesses the voting

website, validating (authenticating) identity of the eligible (registered) voter to produce a

validated voter (step 242) [Column 28, lines 13-14];

receiving voting information (answers to survey questions) from validated voters

[Claim 1]; and

compiling the voting information (adding received answers to information stored

in a database) from the validated voters to produce the voting result [Claim 5].

As per claims 2 and 19, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1, wherein the

email message provided to each eligible voter includes a hyperlink (URL) to the voting

website [Column 13, lines 56-58].

As per claims 3 and 20, Bayer et al. teaches a method where registration

information about users, such as their email address (element 168 of Figure 15), can be

obtained from a database (element 15 of Figure 15) [Column 19, lines 24-32] and may

be used generate an email message to eligible voters (solicit voters to a particular

voting campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a voting campaign) using the

email address retrieved [Column 18, lines 58-60].

As per claim 4, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1 further comprising providing a plurality of hyperlinks on the voting website, wherein a first hyperlink of the plurality of hyperlinks directs an eligible voter to a voting page (URL of a registration/voting campaign) and a second (embedded) hyperlink of the plurality of hyperlinks directs the user to documentation related to the voting issue (URL of an associated campaign) [Column 18, lines 49-55].

As per claims 5 and 24, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1 wherein providing the plurality of eligible voters with access to the voting website further comprises:

sending an email message to potential voters (solicit voters to a particular voting campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a voting campaign) [Column 18, lines 58-60] wherein the email message provided to each eligible voter includes a hyperlink (URL) to the voting website [Column 13, lines 56-58];

receiving consent (registration) information corresponding to at least a portion of the plurality of potential voters based on responses (user name, password and email address) provided by the at least a portion of the plurality of potential voters via the content (registration) website [Column 19, lines 24-30]; and

determining the plurality of eligible voters (authenticating validation) from the at least a potion of the plurality of potential (registered) voters based on the consent (registration) information [Column 28, lines 13-14].

As per claims 7 and 26, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1, wherein validating identify of the eligible voter to produce a validated voter further comprises:

receiving a user identity (step 240) from the eligible voter;

receiving a password (step 240) from the eligible voter;

comparing the password with a stored password corresponding to the user identity (step 242) to produce a comparison result, wherein when the comparison result is favorable, the eligible voter is validated to produce a validated voter [Column 28, lines 5-25].

As per claims 9 and 27, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1, wherein validating identity of the eligible voter to produce a validated voter further comprises:

detecting an electronic certificate (Voting Digital ID and VoteCookie) stored on a host device (host computer) associated with the eligible voter; and

comparing the electronic certificate (VoteCookie) with a validation certificate (VoteLog table) stored in a database to produce a comparison result, wherein when the comparison result is favorable (no voting record found in the VoteLog table), the eligible voter is validated (indicating that the user has not yet voted) to produce a validated voter. [Column 10, lines 26-30 and Column 14, lines 14-50]

As per claim 10, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1, wherein compiling the voting information further comprises storing the voting information (answers to survey questions received from each voter) in a database [Claim 5].

As per claims 16 and 33, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 1 wherein providing the plurality of eligible voters with access to the voting website further comprises:

providing a consent notification (sending an email message) to a potential voter of a plurality of potential voters, wherein the consent notification notifies the potential voter of the consent website (solicit voters to a particular voting campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a voting campaign) [Column 18, lines 58-60];

receiving consent (registration) information corresponding to at least a portion of the plurality of potential voters based on responses (user name, password and email address) provided by the at least a portion of the plurality of potential voters via the content (registration) website [Column 19, lines 24-30]; and

determining the plurality of eligible voters (authenticating validation) from the at least a potion of the plurality of potential (registered) voters based on the consent (registration) information [Column 28, lines 13-14].

As per claim 18, Bayer et al. teaches a voting management processor, comprising:

a processing module (computer system represented by network server 12); and

memory (element 14 of Figure 1) operably coupled to the processing module, wherein the memory stores operating (programmed) instructions that, when executed by the processing module, cause the processing module to perform functions that include:

providing notification of a voting website to a plurality of eligible voters, wherein the notification is provided via an email message sent to each eligible voter of the plurality of eligible voters, wherein the notification provides the plurality of eligible voters with access to the voting website (with a hyperlink to the URL) [Column 13, lines 56-58 and Column 18, lines 55-60];

for each eligible voter of the plurality of eligible voters that accesses the voting website, validating (authenticating) identity of the eligible (registered) voter to produce a validated voter (step 242) [Column 28, lines 13-14];

receiving voting information (answers to survey questions) from validated voters [Claim 1]; and

compiling the voting information (adding received answers to information stored in a database) from the validated voters to produce the voting result [Claim 5].

As per claim 21, Bayer et al. teaches the voting management processor of claim 20, wherein the voter database (element 15 of Figure 1) is stored in the memory (element 14 of Figure 1) [Figure 1 and Column 5, line 12].

As per claim 22, Bayer et al. teaches the voting management processor of claim 20, wherein the voter database (database 15) is accessed by the voting management processor (computer system operating in accordance with software) over a network (network server 12 and network 20) [Figure 1 and Column 5, lines 42-44].

As per claim 23, Bayer et al. teaches the voting management processor of claim 20, wherein the memory stores additional (programmed) instructions such that the functions performed by the processing module include providing a plurality of hyperlinks on the voting website, wherein a first hyperlink of the plurality of hyperlinks directs an eligible voter to a voting page (URL of a registration/voting campaign) and a second (embedded) hyperlink of the plurality of hyperlinks directs the user to documentation related to the voting issue (URL of an associated campaign) [Column 5, lines 42-44 and Column 18, lines 49-55].

As per claim 28, Bayer et al. teaches the voting management processor of claim 18, wherein compiling the voting information further comprises storing the voting information (whether or not a voter voted and who they voted for) in the memory (VoteLog table) [Column 14, lines 36-50].

As per claim 35, Bayer et al. teaches a voting system, comprising:

a first network (network 20 of Figure 1);

a voting server (network server 12 of Figure 1) operably coupled to the first network; and

a plurality of clients (computer 18 of Figure 1) operably coupled to the first network, where each of the plurality of clients provides access to the voting server to a portion of a plurality of potential voters, wherein the voting server performs functions that include:

receiving consent (registration) information corresponding to at least a

portion of the plurality of potential voters based on responses (user name, password

and email address) provided by the at least a portion of the plurality of potential voters

via the content (registration) website [Column 19, lines 24-30];

determining the plurality of eligible voters (authenticating validation) from

the at least a potion of the plurality of potential (registered) voters based on the consent

(registration) information [Column 28, lines 13-14];

sending voting notification email message to the plurality of eligible voters

(solicit voters to a particular voting campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a

voting campaign) [Column 18, lines 58-60], wherein the voting notification email

messages provide access (a hyperlink) to a voting website managed by the voting

server [Column 13, lines 56-58];

for each eligible voter of the plurality of eligible voters that accesses the

voting website, validating (authenticating) identity of the eligible (registered) voter to

produce a validated voter (step 242) [Column 28, lines 13-14];

receiving voting information (answers to survey questions) from validated

voters [Claim 1]; and

compiling the voting information (adding received answers to

information stored in a database) from the validated voters to produce the voting result

[Claim 5].

As per claim 36, Bayer et al. teaches the voting system of claim 35 wherein the

functions performed by the voting server further include:

sending an email message to potential voters (solicit voters to a particular voting

campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a voting campaign) [Column 18, lines

58-60].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set
> forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and
> the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the
> invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains.
> Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

7.   Claims 6, 8, 11 – 15, 17, 25, 29 – 32, 24, and 37 – 39 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bayer et al.

As per claims 6, 17, 25 and 34, Bayer et al. teaches the method of claim 5,

wherein at least one hyperlink is provided on the voting website, wherein a first

hyperlink directs an eligible voter to a voting page (URL of a registration/voting

campaign) when the eligible voter has consented to vote electronically, and a second

(embedded) hyperlink directs the eligible voter to documentation related to the voting

issue (URL of an associated campaign) when the eligible voter has consented to

receive documentation electronically [Column 18, lines 49-55].

Bayer et al. is silent regarding consent to vote electronically and consent to

receive documentation electronically. However, it is common knowledge that users who

have registered for elections are subject to receiving relevant documentation, commonly

in electronic formats. The examiner has interpreted the act of user registration taught by

Bayer et al. to be a statement of the user's intent to vote using the web site and an

authorization for the web site to send relevant documentation to the user. Therefore, the

system taught by Bayer et al. meets the limitations of the claim.

As per claim 8, Bayer et al. fails to explicitly teach a method wherein receiving

the user identity and the password is performed using a secure data communication

protocol. However, it is old and well known in the art that either a HTTPS protocol or a

SSL protocol can be used to handle secure communication between a web server and a

web browser. It is common knowledge that the HTTPS protocol typically handles credit

card transactions and other sensitive data. It is also common knowledge that the SSL

protocol is designed to provide privacy between a web server and a web browser by

authenticating the server (and sometimes the client) uses an algorithm to encrypt data.

It is old and well known in the art that such security measures are compatible with web

browsers and are used by websites that typically transmit sensitive data. Authenticating

the identity of the user would result in preventing voter fraud (ineligible voters, voters

voting multiple times, etc, voting under a different name, etc) and would allow the

system to recognize what issues the user is eligible to vote for. Encrypting transmitted

data would prevent secure information about the user or their vote from being monitored

(reducing the risk of identity theft by computer hackers) and would provide users with a

greater sense of security that may lead to increased voter participation.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to use a secure data communication protocol for the reasons discussed above therein.

As per claims 11 and 29, Bayer et al. teaches a method where an email message is generated (solicit voters to a particular voting campaign by e-mail with a hyperlink to the URL of a voting campaign) using the email address retrieved [Column 18, lines 58-60], but does not explicitly teach sending the email message to a transfer agent. However, it is old and well known in the art that the role of transfer agents in the election process is to store tallied results, or to tally the received votes and determine a winner. Furthermore, it is inherent that transfer agents would only receive voting information corresponding to eligible voters. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to generate and send an email message to transfer agents including voting information corresponding to eligible voters so that received votes can be tallied and verified and a winner can be determined.

As per claims 12 and 30, Bayer et al. is silent regarding the encryption of an email message prior to sending the at least one transfer agent email message to the transfer agent. However, it is old and well known in the art that email messages containing confidential and sensitive data, such as financial information (credit card and bank account numbers), and personal identification (social security numbers) are encrypted and transmitted through a secure connection to a network server. It would

have been obvious to one of ordinary skill to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. by

encrypting email messages in order to ensure voter privacy and to prevent tampering

with election results.

As per claims 13 and 31, Bayer et al. teaches a method wherein compiling the

voting information further comprises:

generating and sending an email message (solicit voters to a particular voting

campaign by e-mail) [Column 18, lines 58-60]

Bayer et al. is silent regarding sending email messages containing voting

information to transfer agents. However, it is old and well known in the art that the role

of transfer agents in the election process is to store tallied results, or to tally the votes

and determine a winner. It is common knowledge that, if the transfer agent is assigned

the responsibility of tallying the votes to determine the winner, then whenever voting

information is received during the predetermined voting time period, it should be sent to

the transfer agent for tallying. It is inherent that transfer agents would only receive

voting information corresponding to eligible voters who participated in the vote during

the predetermined voting time period.

It is common knowledge that elections occur during a predetermined voting

period, as they are not indefinite events. It is old and well known in the art that any

system used to conduct elections would have some means accepting votes only during

the predetermined voting period, disregarding any votes received after this period and

ceasing to accept additional completed voting forms. It is inherent that voters who failed

to register or vote during the predetermined voting time will not have their votes tallied in

determining the winner. It is common knowledge that eligible nonvoters have no

"default" selections, as they did not participate in the election. The method taught by

Bayer et al. could be used to send a final email message at the end of a predetermined

voting time regarding voting information such as the number of eligible nonvoters, the

number of eligible voters who participated in the election, etc. Therefore, it would have

been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the

teachings of Bayer et al. to generate and send an email message to transfer agents

including voting information corresponding to votes during a predetermined time period

so that valid received votes can be tallied and verified and a winner can be determined.

As per claims 14 and 32, Bayer et al. does not teach the step of transferring

contents of a database to the transfer agent. However, means of transferring electronic

data are old and well known in the art (including electronic data interchange, file transfer

protocol, compact disc, floppy disk, etc). It is old and well known in the art that the role

of transfer agents is to tally all the votes cast for the voting issue, or simply to store

results after all votes have been tallied. It is common knowledge that records of

elections must be maintained to verify election results, especially in case of recounts. It

is also common knowledge that, without a backup copy of the elections, there is the risk

of losing existing data (file corruption, hard drive crashing, hacked by external entities,

etc.). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time

of invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to transfer the contents of the

database to the transfer agent for the reasons discussed above therein.

As per claim 15, Bayer et al. is silent regarding a method wherein email

messages to the plurality of eligible voters are delivered via an internal network, wherein

website access to the eligible voters is provided via the internal network, and wherein

email messages to the transfer agent are delivered via an external network. Official

Notice is taken that the essential idea of an Intranet is that it uses Local Area Network

(LAN) technologies to facilitate communication between people and improve the

knowledge base of an organization's employees. Intranets can include mail servers

based on low cost Internet technology. Two pieces of software must run on the mail

server. First, Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) server software is required to

communicate with other mail servers to transfer mail between mail servers. A Post

Office Protocol (POP) server is required to communicate with the end user computers

for reading and sending mail. On an Intranet, network administrators can prescribe

access and policy for a fixed group of users. Intranets make use of Internet technologies

within an organization to achieve better results than the conventional means of data

access and transfer, while cutting costs and providing easy and fast access to

information. The network firewalls that surround an Intranet prevent unauthorized

access. Transfer agents are usually independent parties not in the organization, and

would therefore be prohibited from accessing the intranet to view websites or receive

email, so the use of external networks would inherently be required to deliver email

messages.

As per claim 37, Bayer et al. teaches the voting system of claim 35 further

comprising:

a voting server (network server 12 of Figure 1) compiles the voting information

such that compiling includes:

generating at least one email message (solicit voters to a particular voting

campaign by e-mail) [Column 18, lines 58-60],

Bayer et al. does not explicitly teach sending an email message including voting

information to a transfer agent. However, it is old and well known in the art that the role

of transfer agents in the election process is to store tallied results, or to tally the votes

and determine a winner. Furthermore, it is inherent that transfer agents would only

receive voting information corresponding to eligible voters. Regardless of who tallies the

results, it is inherent that the process would involve the step of compiling the voting

information (adding received answers to information stored in a database) from the

validated voters to produce the voting result [Claim 5], as taught by Bayer et al.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to send voting information to transfer

agents so that received votes can be tallied and verified and determined, and a winner

can be determined.

Bayer et al. is also silent regarding the presence of a second network coupled to

the voting server and a transfer agent being operably coupled to that second network.

However, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of

invention to couple the transfer agent to a network to enable the transfer agent to

receive voting information in the form of email messages and database file contents so

that received votes can be tallied and verified, and a winner can be determined.

As per claim 38, Bayer et al. fails to explicitly teach a voting system wherein the

first network is a secure internal network and wherein the second network is an external

network, wherein the voting information included in the at least one transfer agent email

message is encrypted prior to being sent to the transfer agent. However, it is old and

well known in the art that email messages containing confidential and sensitive data,

such as financial information (credit card and bank account numbers), and personal

identification (social security numbers) are encrypted and transmitted through a secure

connection to a network server. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of

ordinary skill to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. by encrypting email messages in

order to ensure voter privacy and to prevent tampering with election results.

It also is old and well known in the art that Intranets are secure internal networks

that can include mail servers based on low cost Internet technology. It is common

knowledge that transfer agents are usually independent parties not in the organization,

and would therefore be prohibited from accessing the intranet to view websites or

receive email, so the use of external networks would inherently be required to deliver

email messages. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the

time of invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to include Intranets to provide

registered voters secure access to the voting website, where they can view relevant information and vote.

As per claim 39, Bayer et al. fails to explicitly teach the voting system of claim 37 further comprising a broker server operably coupled to the second network, wherein the broker server collects broker client voting information from a plurality of broker clients, wherein the broker server forwards the broker client voting information to the transfer agent via the second network, wherein the transfer agent compiles the voting information in the at least one transfer agent email message with the broker client voting information to produce the voting result. Bayer et al. does not explicitly teach a broker server coupled to a network that collects and forwards voting information to transfer agents. However, it is old and well known in the art that data servers are integral parts of transferring electronic information and data. It is also old and well known in the art that the role of transfer agents in the election process is to store tallied results, or to tally the votes and determine a winner. Furthermore, it is inherent that transfer agents would only receive voting information corresponding to eligible voters. Regardless of who tallies the results, it is inherent that the process would involve the step of compiling the voting information (adding received answers to information stored in a database) from the validated voters to produce the voting result [Claim 5], as taught by Bayer et al. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to modify the teachings of Bayer et al. to send voting information to transfer agents via a server so that transfer agents can receiving voting information and votes can be tallied and verified and a winner can be determined.

Conclusion

8.   The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

"Memo To Me" is a free reminder service that allows users to specify one time or recurring events and automatically reminds users using email.

Grow (U.S Patent #6,694,315) teaches an online document assembly and docketing method using a user workstation interconnected over a network backbone to a website. Upon accessing the website, the method allows users to register or login. The method verifies that the user is a registered user by matching the user ID and password to that of a registered user. The user can select hyperlinks to view additional information and is sent email reminders of upcoming deadlines, appointments, etc.

Coleman (PG Pub #2002/0026351) teaches a method for delivering targeted commercial messages. A plurality of potential purchaser profiles are assembled in an electronic file. Information gathered from user registration is verified for accuracy by comparing it to information in a variety of other databases, such as public databases maintained by cities, countries, states, governmental entities, private databases, credit bureaus, state departments of motor vehicle records, property tax databases, etc.

Lloyd (U.S Patent #6,801,900) teaches a system and method for conducting online dispute resolutions comprising a computer, an active issue database, and a

communications link between the computer and the Internet. The system authenticates user qualifications and identities and tallies votes. The system requires users to register and login before voting. Vote processing software receives and processes voting forms to determine the user's selections, and transmits the current vote tally to the user over the communications link. The system allows the submitter of the issue to establish a predetermined voting time period during which time votes will be tallied. When the set time period has expired, the vote processing software closes voting on the issue by disregarding the vote and ceasing to accept additional completed voting forms. The vote processing software then transfers results to the issue database.

West et al. (U.S Patent #6,175,833) teaches a system and method for interactive live online voting with tallies for updating voting results. The system consists of a web site that supports interactive online voting comprising a server to serve the surveys over a network (such as the Internet) to readers and databases to store surveys and votes/responses. A vote handler processes votes cast by the readers and votes are checked to prevent readers from voting multiple times. The vote handler tallies the votes cast and results are archived in a survey database.

Linstead et al. (U.S Patent #5,548,753) teaches a method for providing an automatic electronic mail notification to users of the occurrence of predetermined events.

Srinivasan (U.S Patent #5,548,506) teaches an automated, electronic network based project management server system. The system tracks pending tasks and reminds task owners on a pre-determined frequency on when to start/finish tasks. A project database is updated when new information is received.

Whitmyer, Jr. (U.S Patent #6,049,801) teaches a web site that permits direct client entry of reminders to a central database for automating delivery of services relating to the reminders. A device and method is provided to transmit reminders and receive replies over the Internet. Reminders, reminder dates, client identifiers and replies are stored in databases and are sent through a web page.

Whitmyer, Jr. (U.S Patent #6,182,078) teaches a system for delivering professional services over the Internet. The system includes a computer, a database of client reminders, software for automatically querying the database, and comprises a web site. The software also automatically generates a form based on the retrieved client reminder and transmits it to the client by email through an Internet connection link to a client computer. Client email notices contain a statement directed to a client that a deadline is approaching and that a response is necessary, and contains a URL which directs the user to the response form web page.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Peter Choi whose telephone number is (703) 305-0852. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on (703) 305-9643. The fax phone number for

the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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PC

March 2, 2005

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